

**Minute/Decision Summary  
Housing and Neighbourhood Partnership  
19<sup>th</sup> May 2009**

<b>Item/Issue</b>	<b>Decision</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Contact</b>
<p><b>Minutes of Previous meeting</b> The minutes from the meeting of 24<sup>th</sup> March 2009 were agreed as a true record. Councillor Steve Nelson's apologies to be added to the minutes.</p>			<p>Simon Rogalski Housing Strategy Officer Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council (01642) 528359</p>
<p><b>Matters Arising</b> Communities Fund Update The BOOST partnership has now been renamed as 'Work Steps'.</p>			
<p><b>Financial Inclusion in the Borough</b> Diane Patterson, Chair of the borough's Financial Inclusion Forum provided an overview of financial inclusion in the borough.</p> <p>It was confirmed that press releases will be taking place for the 'Busting the Credit Crunch' drop in session to be held at Billingham and a stall in the market and street entertainment in order to attract attention. A pre meeting will be held to discuss publicising measures. Past event in Stockton was a success however Thornaby was not potentially due to venue.</p> <p>Ross Hunt gave an overview of his role as a DWP Financial Inclusion Champion.</p> <p>An overview of the work of Christians Against Poverty was given by Roy Parker. It was noted that Christians Against Poverty receive no government funding and rely upon voluntary contributions often received from past clients who have gained assistance once their financial circumstances have improved. Centres are run within churches who promote the scheme.</p> <p>Information about the Tees Credit Union was also given. People</p>			<p>Diane Patterson Tees Credit Union (01642) 753517</p>

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<p>need to be a member of the Tees Credit Union to apply for a loan. There is one telephone number with access to all services offered by the Credit Union.</p> <p>The costing to produce a signposting leaflet for financial advice can be costly so a referral guide is to be produced for Front line staff. As all staff are stretched as the situation increases a self help pack is looking to be developed in order to ease pressure on services.</p> <p>SDAIS have housing related enquiry statistics by ward that can be circulated to partnership members if requested. It shows an increase in most areas of the borough including the more affluent areas.</p>			
<p><b>Fuel Poverty and Energy Advice</b></p> <p>Mike Chicken, Environmental Policy Manager, provided an update on energy saving advice and assistance for residents in particular the Community Energy Saving Programme, worth £350m which is set to focus on the most deprived areas in the country, including some areas in the borough.</p> <p>Fuel prices have experienced a 250% increase from 2003, rises in income and benefits have not increased accordingly. Warm front provided a maximum grant and the council often met the shortfall for the amount needed to complete works. Clients needed to make a contribution but many could not afford it so the PCT was approached to assist under a health initiative.</p> <p>A scheme called 'Go warm' was introduced 2 years ago which provides services such as loft insulation to identified priority areas. To promote the initiative and seek those people who require assistance 'door to door' approaches have been adopted and as a result 50,000+ people have been identified to assist in this way.</p> <p>The 'Community Energy Saving Programme' and how it is funded was briefly explained. Once a fuel bill has received payment a</p>			<p>Mike Chicken, Environmental Policy Manager, Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council (01642) 528148</p>

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<p>small element goes into a pot of money which is used to assist those in need. This is used in target areas from the 10% most deprived that have been identified. Approx £3.5 million could be available that could cover 90+ households in the borough.</p> <p>The government is promoting energy consumption monitoring in the home by distributing monitors that fit onto electric metres which show the cost of the energy used.</p> <p>Concern was raised that government grants are still given to tenants rather than properties and that this can cause problems in the private rented sector. It was noted that the approach is more relaxed now and this should become less of a problem.</p> <p>There might be an opportunity for the Council to make use of the information on energy performance certificates that landlords need to have for their properties.</p>			
<p><b>Time2Buy – The Homebuy agent for the Tees Valley and County Durham</b></p> <p>Rachael Swales, gave a presentation on Time2Buy, the Homebuy Agent for County Durham and Tees Valley. HomeBuy is a government initiative to help first time buyers, key workers and people re-entering the housing market get onto the property ladder.</p> <p>It was noted that there had been much interest in Homebuy however it should not be seen as appropriate for all households.</p>			<p>Rachael Swales, Affordable Homeownership Team Leader Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council (01642) 528503</p>
<p><b>Comprehensive Area Assessment</b></p> <p>Lesley King, gave a presentation on the new national framework for performance assessment, Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA), which will provide a snapshot of how effectively local partnerships are working together to deliver local people's priorities.</p> <p>Additional information on CAA can be provided by contacting Lesley.</p>			<p>Lesley King, Head of Performance and Partnerships Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council (01642) 527004</p>

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<p><b>Any Other Urgent Business</b>  <u>Renaissance Update</u>            Past meetings held:            7<sup>th</sup> April 2009 was an update on housing in the borough and presentation            12<sup>th</sup> May 2009 was Regeneration Strategy Update and Crime Update. There has been a reported 30% decrease in crime rates in the borough however the fear of crime has not been reduced in accordance to the figure released by the Home Office.</p> <p><u>Audit of Partnership</u>            Audit by the Council of the Partnership's Healthcheck has received top marks! Suggestions to include information in the Terms of Reference on gifts and hospitality and a review of the Terms of Reference on an annual basis will be implemented. Partnership members will be able to view and comment on the revised Terms of Reference on the partnerships web-pages.</p> <p><u>Election of Chair and Vice-Chair</u>            David Pickard's year as Chair and Diane Smith's as Vice Chair has come to an end and elections for July 09-July10 are required for these positions. Information will be sent out shortly on how members can self-nominate for chair and vice chair.</p> <p><u>Future Agenda Items</u>            Any Issues for the agenda for future meetings should be sent to Julie Higgins, Partnership Secretariat.</p>	<p>To be included in next agenda</p> <p>To be included in next agenda</p>	<p>See website for details</p> <p>Information to be sent to partnership members.</p> <p>Partnership members to forward/suggest any future agenda items</p>	
<p><b>Date and Time of next meeting</b>            Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> July 2009, 2pm, Watersports Centre, Castlegate Quay, Stockton-on-Tees</p>			<p>Simon Rogalski            Stockton-on-Tees            Borough Council            Housing Strategy Officer            (01642) 528359</p>

**Present:****Partnership Members:**

Dave Pickard, Tristar Homes Ltd (Chair)	Sue Thompson, Teesside Properties	Martin Jefferson, Accent Group
Suzie Thompson, Fabrick Housing Group	Michelle Street, Stockton Flats	Sandra S Drysdale, Teesside Probation
Janine Brown, SDAIS	Helen Dixon, ASB Team, Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council	Ross Hunt, DWP Financial Inclusion Champion
Dianne Patterson, Tees Credit Union	Roy Parker, Central Renaissance Area Partnership Representative	Rachael Swales, Affordable Homeownership Team Leader, Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council
Mike Chicken, Environmental Policy Manager, Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council	Jill Young, Benefits Service, Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council	Cllr Steve Nelson, Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council

**Advisors/Officers**

Julie Higgins, Housing Strategy and Development, Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council	Simon Rogalski, Housing Strategy and Development, Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council	Louise Etherington, Housing Strategy and Development, Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council
Tracey Oliver, Housing Strategy and Development, Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council		

**Apologies:****Partnership Members:**

Cllr Mrs Suzanne Fletcher, Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council	Kathryn West, Anchor Housing	Julie Nixon, Head of Housing, Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council
Mr Thind, MS Properties	Lesley Wardle, Places for People	Chris Fixter, Jomast Properties
Peter Smith, Adult Strategy Team, Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council	Christine Allen, HOME Group	Diane Smith, Endeavour Housing Association